

confidential--for members only

draft

MINUTES, N.Y.LOCAL.....,12 May 1966

Present: Harry, Roger, Helen, Sam, Al, Lynne, Ron, Hugh, Jim, Shirley, Paul, Bob, Shelly, Lyndon, Jack, Dave, Winnie, Tippy
Others: Ann S., John S., John Sw. (all of Austin OC), also George, X, Y, Jim M.
Absent: Price (exc.) Danny, Peter

Meeting began at 8:30 p.m.

Motion: To admit John S., Ann S., and John Sw. from Austin OC with voice and consultative vote. Passed

Motion: To admit Y, X, and Jim M. with voice and consultative vote. Passed

1. Organization of Meeting: (a) Chairman - Al
 (b) Agenda adopted
 (c) Minutes of 28 April adopted as corrected

Correction to point 3. para d.(7), last sentence should end "here", not "there". I.e., our principal task at this time is the development of a strong section in the U.S.

2. Membership:

Motion: To table action on Donna's membership application until she gets back to the N.Y.local. Passed

Motion: To accept Lynn M. and Carol L. as full members of Spartacist. Disc: Jim, Al Passed

3. General Information and Correspondence - Jim

- a. Fraser Group. Has taken 28 out of SWP-YSA, mainly in Seattle. This was the last organized opposition tendency within the SWP, as Swabeckites are fragmented. Fraserites resigned on mixed basis: tired of SWP's classless opposition to Vietnam war, weary of endless bureaucratic harrassment; they are opposed to political revolution in China, hence conciliatory to Maoism. We have political overlap with them on Negro question, line of Revolutionary Integration; also we have organizational and personal contact with them. Their greatest political weakness is "Pacific Northwest Chauvanism." This is a tightly-knit geographical cadre with the idea of geographical rather than programmatic unity. SWP is throwing in some hard, bitter forces into Seattle to fight Fraser group. SWP has lost 60 members since their September convention.
- b. Letter from Rose with excellent report on V.O. Copies of letter available.
- c. Announcement received of impending marriage of Ross and Donna on 5/14/66.
- d. Mexico City: Posadas grouping and Adolpho Gilly framed up, raided, and jailed for "conspiracy" after great student strike at Univ. of Mexico. Students crossed police barricades to beat police, captured University present and forced him to resign. Next issue of SPARTACIST will defend Trotskyists in Cuba, Mexico and Poland.
- e. Baltimore: Press there carried account of "bearded former Hopkins student" who had in his room "Communist literature, a bomb, a gun and a letter threatening to kill the president. Complete sensationalism, e.g. "bomb" was really photo-electric cell, etc. We have taken no action as papers did not mention name of person or Spartacist. Bob B. was physically attacked and then expelled from Vietnam Committee for being attacked by Keith Kern and related Maoists who control committee. Alexander K., a candidate member, resigned, apparently under their influence.

Disc: Helen, Jim M.

4. ACFI-IC - Jim

ACFI has tabled projected debate under direction of London. Copies of several documents available. The most important thing we can be doing now is reaching ACFI's vulnerable people, and contacting is proceeding apace. Jim recently visited Jeff and Debby, found Debby responsive. J& B to dinner at Jim and Lynne's Friday. Sherwood to Minnesota to "drop in on" the Brusts' this weekend. Price, Ron, and Shelly talk with Marty, Bob D. and Debby in Tompkins Sq. Committee. Bulletin of 9 May out, contains 2 page "political" attack on Spartacist.
Disc: Helen, Lynn

5. Local Organization - Al

2 motions passed unanimously by Exec. presented:

(1) To divide the N.Y. Local into Uptown and Downtown Local Committees.
(2) To endorse proposals A through K implementing the division. Present local "heavy" plus others coming in for summer. More comrades would be forced into activity and given chance for greater responsibility. Presence of N.O. in N.Y. makes the Local the tail that wags the dog--our opinions and votes here disproportionately heavy in organization as a whole. By having downtown local, new arenas will be opened up that are presently neglected. Only PL active in downtown area, with YSA trying to reestablish itself. We will have initial discussion tonight, continue discussion and vote at next meeting.

(a) There will be City Committee of 5 members, 2 local execs. of 3 members each; a City Organizer and 2 local organizers; City Comm. would include both local organizers.

(b) City-wide fractions such as Welfare and CORE would be responsible to City Committee. Local work, such as Harlem Viet Nam Committee or Tompkins Sq., would be responsible to locals.

(c) Transfers between locals would be only with permission of City Comm.; visits (with voice and consultative vote) approved by Local Execs.

(d) Education will be mostly on City-wide basis; will need city-wide Educ. Chairman.

(e) Areas of work:

Downtown (incl. Brooklyn)

N.Y. Univ.

Tompkins Sq. Peace Comm.

Free University

Workers' Action

Local 1199

Distri ct 65

SWP and SWP fronts

Puerto Rican Independence Groups

Uptown (including Bronx)

CCNY

Columbia

Harlem

Comm. for Indep. Polit. Action

(Aronowitz)

Anti-War Activity

Recommend that any discussion of suggested personnel shifts and qualifications be discussed at next Exec. rather than in Local. These are not proposed for vote. Locals will decide by election. Suggest Hugh and Jack be assigned to downtown Local; Al - City organizer; Bob S., uptown organizer; Shelly downtown organizer.

(f) No more mimeo'd local minutes; only REB minutes for nat'l circulation.

(g) Will begin separation of local and national treasuries gradually; at present local treasurers will primarily collect pledges for N.O.

(h) Political Bureau reports will be given by a nat'l officer in each Local so that one local will not be "more in the know" than the other.

(i) Joint city-wide membership meetings bimonthly except for issues of general concern.

(k) We will harden up on contacting; follow-up assignments will be made.

First round of disc: Helen, Hugh, Shirley, Sam, Jim, Carol, Sam, Jim, Roger, Jim, Ron
Summary - Al

6. Urgent working point - Jim

Mailing parties needed Saturday and Sunday to get out SW #3 and #4.

Sat. 11 - 5 pm: Sam, Tippy, Ron, Lynn, Carol, Helen, Al, Jim M., Jack

Sun. 12 - 5 pm: Winnie, Lyndon, John S, Ann S, John Sw., Roger

7. Welfare Report - Lynne

Work takes place within framework of Trotsky's "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay". Political line is reflected in caucus leaflets and actions of fraction outlined in previous local minutes. Purpose of the fraction is to build a leftwing around transitional demands, and eventually to struggle for leadership of the union. Present leadership is liberal-reformist and is moving rapidly to the right. It is unwilling even to mobilize membership to fight threat posed by Tripartite. We have organized a small caucus, our ideas have had impact, and our pen is feared by leadership. Last Exec. voted down motion to prevent our distribution of Caucus leaflets at door of general membership meetings by 2 - 1. Main criticism of our work is that we have not formed a working structure to the Caucus and have not been diligent enough about contacting and bringing in interested people.

Motion by Helen: 4 minute time limit for 1st round with provision for extended time for those with special positions. Passed

Special position - Tippy

Is critical of the tactics of Welfare Fraction. Union is in a precarious situation and our tactics should flow from this; our present tactics could lead to destruction of the arena. Majority of membership is "backward" and tactical retreats are a legitimate possibility. Complete opposition to leadership, the path presently being pursued by fraction, is wrong and will lead to alienation of militants and isolation of fraction. Fraction has a poor orientation and is unknowledgable from lack of involvement. Examples of mistakes is that we falsely charged union leadership with calling for more police to ghetto; also our opposition to binding arbitration of grievances, a traditional demand of unions. Members of welfare fraction should be known as militant unionists first before making their "great" criticisms.

(It was decided to extend the meeting to 12 midnight and table remaining points with provision that tabled points get top priority at next meeting. Those with special involvement will speak tonight followed by partial summary with discussion continuing at next meeting.)

Disc: Helen, Lyndon, Lynn M. Summary - Lynne

Motion: Refer to Exec whether to have extra meeting next Thursday.

Amendment: Refer to Exec. disposition of when extra meeting is feasible.

Passed as amended

8. Announcements:

(a) Stanley Aronowitz on Independent Political Action, Beacon Hotel 18 May.

(b) Eugene Genovese speaking Sat.

(c) Workers Action, 20 May.

(d) Party at Helen's on Sunday night, 8 p.m., to meet Austin comrades.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 a.m.